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Allyson Leigh Pellissier, Class of 2010, Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award

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Allyson Leigh Pellissier

“A lot of people know who Allyson Pellissier is. She greets them with a smile and a kind word. But very few people know of all the work that Allyson does for Rhodes and the Memphis community. That’s a true statement about her humble and giving character,” says one student.

Allyson served as the Student Allocations Board Treasurer last year. The treasurer organizes the activity fee allocation process to all student organizations. Students have called this position “daunting,” “thankless,” and “involving a countless number of hours.” In this role, Allyson has been described as “fair,” “serving all students,” and “transparent.” One student said that Allyson “mediated patiently between argumentative board members and handled criticism with grace.”

Allyson is also a regular volunteer with Advocates for the Homeless and the Rhodes Souper Contact soup kitchen. A student told me a story that exemplifies Allyson’s commitment to relationships. There are two guests, a dating couple, who regularly attend the soup kitchen, and Allyson has come to know them well. The woman had to leave Memphis for a personal issue and was gone for an extended period of time. The male struggled in her absence. Other students at the soup kitchen couldn’t get through and help him cope with his girlfriend’s absence. One day he was told that Allyson was stopping by. He was so excited by the prospect of talking with her that his demeanor immediately changed. When Allyson arrived, he greeted her with a huge hug and had a wonderful conversation with her about his feelings and struggles. Somehow, Allyson found a way to relate to this man and help him until his friend returned.

One student wrote that “Allyson’s legacy at Rhodes may be defined in a simple way. She is known by the student body as someone who is constantly smiling and always willing to lend a hand.” One last anecdote - I hear that Allyson would take calls in the middle of the night when students were stuck with their Econometrics homework.

For her character and actions of humility, fairness, and service, it is my pleasure to recognize Allyson Pellissier as the female Algernon Sydney Sullivan award recipient for the class of 2010.

William E. Troutt, President
May 15, 2010